

Iowa Department of Human Services
CHILD CARE CENTER EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE

Name of Center: Little Lambs Preschool **Enrollment:** 40 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 22846

Street: 890 State St **City:** Garner **Iowa** **Zip** 50438 **County:** Hancock

Mailing Address: 810 State St, Garner, IA, 50438

Director's Name: Alesha Lentz **Phone Number:** 641-923-2300

On-Site Supervisor(s): **E-Mail:** littlelambstpaul@gmail.com

Date(s) of Visit: 01-08-2024

X **Licensing Visit** X **Unannounced Visit** **Off Year Visit** **Administrative Change**

LICENSING VISITS

New Application X **Re-Application** NA

Signed Application (470-0722) Received **Yes** **No** X **NA** **Date Signed:**

FIRE INSPECTION X **State** **Local** NA **Is Fire Inspection Approved?** X **Yes** **No** NA

Date Inspected: 01-29-2021

Comments : Inspection occurred on 09-18-20, compliance on 01-29-21.

LICENSE TYPE: **Child Care** X **Preschool (ages 3-5 meets three hours or less per day)**

Financial Type: Profit X Non-Profit NA

Accreditation: Accredited NAEYC NSACA Other X NA

Program Serves: Infants (0-23 mo.) 2 Years X Preschool-Age School-Age

Get-Well Evening Care Special Needs

SCHEDULE: Year-round X School-Year Summer Only

HOURS:	<u>Year-round</u>		<u>School-Year</u>	<u>Summer Only</u>	
LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Age	Capacity
General			22		22
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	FULL license from 01-01-2024 to 01-01-2026
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Raymond Salsbury

Date: 01-19-2024

I. IF CURRENT LICENSE IS PROVISIONAL, IDENTIFY THE CORRECTIVE ACTIONS

NA

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

An unannounced annual visit was made to the Little Lambs Preschool on 01-08-24 where I met with center director Alesha Lentz. Alesha took over the directorship of this program in the 2017-18 school year and is well qualified for the position having a formal teaching degree and prior teaching experience. Gail Loschen is the assistant teacher and started with the program for the 2022-23 school year. The center is located in a residential home that has been converted for use for the preschool center. The program is operated as a non-profit preschool by the St. Paul Lutheran Church in Garner and overseen by a board of directors from the church. There are currently 2 teachers and a high school practicum student providing preschool services to 38 children in three sessions. The program offers two sessions for 3 year old preschool with one in the morning, and the other in the afternoon. The other session is offered 4 days a week in the afternoon serving 4 year old children under the Department of Education Preschool Grant program. All aspects of the program subject to licensing standards were reviewed during the visit.

The building and classroom room remain the same as observed in prior reports with some minor changes to furniture arrangement. The primary space has an open floor plan with a kitchenette area that has no cooking appliances. Windows are located along each wall and provide ample natural light, ventilation, and a view of the outdoors. Exits are located at each end of the building and a basement is used as tornado shelter. The exterior exits were maintained to be clear of obstruction and opened easily and readily, but items were being stored on the landing and stairs of the basement access. Given that this is a designated emergency shelter these items need to be moved so that access is not blocked or narrowed. Emergency notices were posted however the written instructions for the back exit were missing and need to be reposted. A bathroom is located just off the main programming area which also has sinks available for hand washing. There is an upper floor that is used for storage only. The facilities were observed to be clean with no maintenance issues noted.

The room is divided into activity centers through the placement of shelves, furniture, and play structures. As noted there were some changes to the room arrangement with moving some furnishings, and eliminating others. The overall effect was to create a more open space providing the children with room to move and play while also not creating any blind areas. The available activity centers include group learning, art/crafts, large/small manipulatives, dramatic play, math/science, and reading. A wall mount TV is present to use as an interactive media center. Each activity center was observed to have a good selection of materials that are readily accessible to the children and in good condition. The toys and materials are appropriate to the ages of the children that attend the program.

The center uses the Creative Curriculum and a copy of the daily schedule and curriculum is posted and provided to parents in a newsletter. In addition to the general curriculum the program also includes a faith based learning lesson. The center establishes a learning focus theme for each week such as Winter, Snow, Hibernation, and specific identified learning concept of a number, letter, shape, and color. The curriculum does follow the same general focus theme for each session. Good interactions were observed with the teachers being engaged actively with the children and participating in the activities with the children. This was observed both in teacher lead activities as well as individual child directed play where the teachers would play with the children but help them explore and expand their learning by asking them questions about their play. The program makes effective use of positive behavior management techniques of providing the children with reminders of expected behavior, redirection, and recognition of positive behaviors which resulted in there being no

behavioral concerns during the time of the visit.

Good health and safety practices were observed on the day of the visit. The teachers did provide supervision and assistance to the children in the restroom to ensure good hygiene and handwashing practices were followed. In addition to ensuring that children and staff wash their hands as required following restroom use, and prior to meals the staff also practice good hygiene with washing their own and having the children wash their hands at other times such as after blowing their nose. The center does maintain a supply of first aid items necessary to address most common first aid needs however it did appear that the supplies were diminishing and should be evaluated for items that need to be replenished. It was also noted that the items are stored in a cabinet in a more general fashion which may have made it harder to fully assess the available materials. Having a more defined storage option such as a case, first aid bag, or other system could make it easier to not only track supplies but have a more readily available system if needed for evacuation. The center did not have any children that were currently taking medications. Children with an identified allergy did have allergy response plans in place. Good cleaning practices were observed with the staff waiting for the children to be out of the immediate vicinity before using cleaning products. Chemical cleaners, and other items that could present a safety risk to children were stored in areas where they were not readily accessible to the children.

Due to the limited hours of each session meals are not served but snacks are provided. The parents take it in turn to provide the snacks for the children. The center parent handbook has a list of suggested snacks and a calendar with the snacks that are actually provided is also maintained. The menu of items that were provided does identify a good variety of items most of which would meet credibility requirements of the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) guidelines. A limited selection of snack items are kept at the center to supplement as needed to ensure that the CACFP guidelines are met. Food items were stored in a manner that is consistent with CACFP guidelines. I was not able to observe a snack service on the day of my visit but the center has followed good service and supervision practices in the past.

The playground was reviewed and the pea gravel used for fall surfacing did appear to have been aerated and supplemented to ensure a good depth of loose fill material. The playground space is fenced and contains some wooden climbing structures. The structures and fencing were observed to be in good repair and no signs of splintering was noted. Shade is provided by several mature trees. The center does engage in limited off-site activities and field trips that are within walking distance such as local parks, business, and community services.

The church has a van which is owned and maintained by the church and the center is allowed to use. The center is providing transportation services. While the center does conduct a background check of the driver that individual is not considered an employee of the program counted in ratio so a teacher accompanies the children when transportation is being provided.

All required notices were posted and readily visible to all parents and visitors. As noted that the evacuation posting at the rear entrance was missing and does need to be replaced so that both written and diagram instructions are present. A random selection of 50% of the child files were reviewed and of those files 6 needed a current physical, and 5 needed a current immunization record. In reviewing staff files all were found to be needing information. In reviewing Alesha's file it was found to have an expired Iowa SING background check, FBI fingerprint background check, and expired physical. The files for both Cynthia and Danielle were missing documentation of background checks which Alesha stated had been done but the results were at the church office. Alesha also stated that the school district is planning to schedule a 1st Aid/CPR training for teachers and the center will participate in that later this spring. In reviewing inspection logs and certificates. The center does have a Radon Mitigation System installed and while mitigation systems do generally have continual monitoring systems testing does need to be conducted two years after installation to confirm that the system is working properly and accurately, and then tested every 5 years there after. Alesha stated that testing has been scheduled. Documentation of fire and tornado evacuation drills were not logged for the current 2023-24 school year. As a reminder drills must be conducted and logged monthly for both fire and tornado evacuation for each session. Documentation of an annual furnace inspection was not available on the day of the visit but Alesha stated that it has been done and she would send a copy of the inspection information.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

The program has in the Quality Rating Scale which seeks to implement best practice recommendations in the past and is in the process of certifying for the IQ4K program which is replacing that program.

The center is in the process of updating the outdoor playground with having installed a new spring rocker activity center, and plans to remove the wooden structures and replace them with a commercial climbing structure.

IV. IDENTIFY THE ASPECTS OF OPERATION THAT FALL BELOW THE STANDARDS REVIEWED:

109.6(6)c: Center repeats Iowa record checks at a minimum of every two years or when aware of additional child abuse or criminal history that occurs.

-- Number not in compliance: 1

109.6(6)d: Center repeats national criminal history checks at a minimum of every four years or when aware of additional history that occurs.

-- Number not in compliance: 1

109.9(1)b: All files contain: A signed copy of DHS criminal history record check or any other permission form approved by the Department of public Safety for conducting an Iowa or national criminal history check. A copy of Request for Child Abuse Information. Copies of the results of Iowa records checks conducted. Copies of national criminal history check results. Any Department-issued documents sent to the center related to records check.

-- Number not in compliance: 2

109.9(1)d: All files contain a pre-employment physical exam report completed within six months prior to hire and at least every three years. Physical exams shall be documented on form 470-5152, Child Care Provider Physical Examination Report.

-- Number not in compliance: 3

109.10(1)a: Preschool (for children five years and younger not enrolled in school): Physical exam report submitted within 30 days of admission, was obtained no more than 12 months prior to admission, is signed by a licensed MD, DO, PA, Chiropractor or ARNP, and contains health history; present health status including allergies, medications, and acute/chronic conditions; and recommendations for continued care if necessary.

-- Number not in compliance: 6

109.10(15)b: Emergency instructions, phone numbers, and diagrams for fire, tornado, and flood shall be visibly posted and documented at least once a month for fire and tornado. Records shall be maintained for current and previous year.

Documentation of emergency fire and tornado drills were not present for the months of Sept - Dec of the 2023-24 school year. Written instructions for fire and tornado evacuation were not posted at the rear exit as required.

109.10(15)d: Daily checks to ensure all exits are unobstructed.

-- Items stored on the steps to the basement area used for emergency storm shelter need to be moved so that they do not block or restrict access to the emergency shelter.

109.11(7)b: Centers at ground level that use basement area as program space, or have a basement beneath program space: Testing and plan for remedy of radon is conducted.

-- Documentation not available on the day of the visit.

109.11(7)c: All centers: Annual inspection prior to heating season of all fuel-burning appliances to reduce risk of carbon monoxide poisoning and shall install one carbon monoxide detector on each floor that conforms to UL Standard 2034.

-- Documentation not available on the day of the visit.

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V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A full license is recommended at this time. Please provide a written response to the licensing consultant identifying a plan of action to correct and maintain those aspects cited as not meeting licensing standards and identifying an anticipated date of compliance. At least one visit will be made to the center during the next year.

*Note: If you are the Child Care Center Director and you feel something is unclear or unjustly cited, please contact your DHS Licensing Consultant to discuss the issue. The child care director may also send a response which will be placed in the licensing file.

*Note: If you are a member of the general public, there may be additional information contained in the public file. You may contact the DHS Licensing Consultant to inquire.

